

# Groton Public Library Disaster Plan

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Adopted by the Groton Public Library  
Board of Trustees on January 14, 2014  
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## **Introduction**

In the event of a disaster, staff and volunteers will immediately react to ensure the safety of everyone at the Groton Public Library. After the safety of patrons and staff are assured, 911 will be contacted, followed by the President of the Library Board of Trustees and the Library Director. Emergency numbers are available at the Circulation Desk and a map of exits and fire safety equipment is on display. Emergency numbers are also contained in this policy.

Recovery operations will be overseen by the director, staff, and the Board of Trustees. Duties will be delegated by the Board President in conjunction with the Library Director according to the responsibilities of individual personnel.

### **I. Objective and Definition**

**Objective:** To prevent disaster within the library and minimize injury and damage through proper preparation, damage suppression, and prompt personnel actions.

**Definition:** Disaster, in terms of the Groton Public Library, is any sudden, severe, or catastrophic event that threatens the lives of the occupants of the building.

- Fire – electrical failure, intentional or accidental ignition of combustible materials, e.g. wood and paper.
- Explosion – ignition, or threat thereof, of natural gas, whether by leakage, failure to ignite or vandalism. Also includes real or reported bomb threat.
- Flooding – accidental release of water or other water-related catastrophe.
- Dangerous Person- armed or threatening person

Also of concern are the collections, management records, and equipment, but these are replaceable and are of low priority compared with human safety.

### **II. Purpose of Disaster Plan**

The disaster plan policy functions to:

- 1) Prevent disasters.
- 2) Provide a procedure for emergencies.
- 3) Provide useful contact information relevant to disaster readiness.
- 4) Provide information on the location of Groton Public Library's safety equipment and supplies.
- 5) Recover from disasters.

### III. Prevention

1. Building Design – the library building incorporates safety features such as emergency exits, portable extinguishers, flashlights, masonry walls, tile roof, and smoke alarms. Fire extinguishers must pass annual inspection by fire department inspectors, and may need recharging or replacement.
2. Safety Practices – training all personnel in recognizing and preventing dangerous conditions. (See Procedures)
3. Structural evaluation will be conducted annually by the buildings and grounds committee to ensure that the roof, plumbing and grounds are in good condition.
4. Board and staff will annually review the procedure for handling specific disasters.
5. Maps of exits and fire equipment will be posted.

### IV. Procedure

**Indoor Threats:** Interior threats include: explosion, fire, bomb, dangerous patron, and flooding.

1. Leave the building if there is danger, insuring that no one is left behind.
2. Call 911. In case of imminent threat, call from outside the building.
3. Call the library executive and the president of the Board of Trustees as listed below.
4. In the event of a violent or dangerous patron, call 911 if possible and avoid confrontation with the patron(s).

**Exterior Threats:** Exterior threats include any threat to the safety of patrons, staff, and the library from outside sources.

1. In the event of a tornado, evacuate all staff and patrons to the basement, northeast corner. The basement door is located in the middle of the library on the west side.

#### **Fire:**

1. If the smoke alarm has not gone off call the fire department by dialing 911.
2. Assist in evacuating the building when possible. Remember to check bathrooms and the offices.
3. Check around the library to ensure that there are no stragglers.
4. Do not re-enter the building until it has been declared structurally sound.
5. Call the Board President and the Library Executive immediately.

#### **Water:**

1. **Until electricity has been disconnected, never enter an area that has been flooded!**
2. Move books higher on shelves and carry to other dry locations.
3. Use tarps/plastic sheeting to cover the stacks.
4. Call the Board President and the Library Executive immediately.

**Explosion:**

1. **Call the Fire Department (911) after leaving the building.**
2. Do not operate any electrical equipment before leaving the building.
3. Assist in evacuation of the building when possible. Remember to check bathrooms, offices, and check around the library to ensure that there are no stragglers.
4. Do not re-enter the building until it has been declared safe.

**Bomb Threat:**

1. Immediately evacuate everyone from the building.
2. If time and circumstances permit, call police (911) before leaving the building.
3. Obtain the following information, if possible:
  - a. Time of threatening call.
  - b. Description of caller's voice and any background noise.
  - c. Location, type, description of bomb, and when it will explode.

**Problem Patrons:**

A problem patron is one who by his/her actions disturbs other patrons or staff. They may be armed with a weapon or may exhibit threatening or physically abusive behavior. (see [Code of Conduct Policy](#)).

It is important we not ignore a patron whose behavior drives others out of the building. It is equally important that we be tolerant of a patron who behaves unusually but doesn't disturb others. If an employee or patron is verbally or physically threatened by an unruly individual and feels that assistance is needed to secure a safe environment, police (911) should be notified and asked to come to the facility immediately. If an unruly individual presents an imminent danger, the library should be evacuated.

**V. Recovery and Salvage**

In the event of a disaster the president will call an emergency trustee meeting to create an immediate plan of action appropriate to the circumstances. Some considerations will include:  
Cause – Work with authorities to determine the true cause of the disaster. Consider prosecution in the event of malicious intent.

Insurance – Work with insurance provider(s) to recover damages for all losses.

Repair/Replacement – Work with contractor(s) to rebuild the library to perform all previous functions.

Injuries/Death – Provide compassionate assistance to injured persons and to families of deceased employees, volunteers, and patrons.

Collections – Rehabilitate damaged items, replace destroyed items on an as-needed basis, and rebuild the collections in line with prevalent usage.

**Salvage Priority List**

1. Local History – to the right of library executive's office
2. Library executive's computer
3. Microfilm (60) – in black drawers by copier

## **VI. Technology**

Every effort will be made to safeguard our technology from unwanted programs by a monthly update and weekly virus scan performed by staff or, in the event of her/his absence, another staff member. Surge protectors are used to prevent Groton Public Library's computers from being affected by the weather.

Regularly scheduled back-ups of library executive's computer will be completed on an external hard drive on a weekly basis at least. In the event of a disaster, the external hard drive is located in the file cabinet in the library executive's office and should be removed from harm if its retrieval poses no danger to staff, volunteers or patrons. Computers should not be touched if there are any electrical concerns.

Technology Support at Finger Lakes Library System can be reached at 607-273-4074, ext 237.

## **VII. Power Outage**

1. Turn off all computers and all lights except for one (so you can see when power has been restored).
2. Determine if the power outage is just the library or the surrounding area. If it is just the library, use contact information at the end of the policy

## **VIII. Medical**

1. Incident – Minor

First aid kit is located in the drawer at the circulation desk.

No medicines should be dispensed to public.

Exercise caution in treatment due to liability to self and library.

2. Incident – Major

This is defined as anything that requires more than a first aid kit.

Call **911**..

Do not move the injured, especially if unconscious or from a bad fall, unless they are in danger where they are (ie: fire, electric hazard) This is to prevent damage to the neck/spine.

Keep the injured comfortable until the ambulance arrives.

3. Incident Report/Witness Report.

Injured fills out Incident Report, with staff assistance. (if needed)

Staff witness fills out Witness portion of report then signs.

Public witness if any fills out Witness portion of report then signs.

## **IX. Winter Storm Closing**

1. Consult with the library executive, the library assistant, or if unreachable, a trustee, but do not put off a decision to close if there is an immediate safety risk.
2. The library executive, or the library assistant, will call TV and radio stations to inform them of the closing. There are contact lists at library executive's home and at the library.
3. Contact other employees that are working later in the day.
4. Post a sign on the door saying EMERGENCY CLOSING or CLOSED DUE TO WEATHER before leaving.

## **Location of Emergency Systems**

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### **1. MAIN UTILITIES**

- Main water shut off valves: in basement – need to be fixed
- Circuit breaker: newspaper room – thru door at bottom of basement stairs
- Heating controls: for the front room they are on the right side post when looking at the front desk and the back room's controls are on the left side in the front of the stacks by the copier
- Air Conditioning controls: the front room's controls are on the wall as you enter the children's room and the back room's controls are on the left side in the front of the stacks by the copier

### **2. FIRE SYSTEMS**

- Fire Extinguishers and type (A/B/C/ABC): library executive's office; just outside back office/kitchen; bottom of basement steps

- Smoke Detectors:

### **3. KITS**

- First Aid Kit: one in circulation desk drawer and second in kitchen bottom cupboard
- Toolbox: on bottom shelve of the shelving cart

### **4. MISCELLANEOUS**

- Keys: in library executive's file cabinet and in front desk drawer

## **Drying Procedures of Materials**

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- A drying area should be an area unaffected by the flooded area. This drying area should have good air circulation. This is one of the key components of the process. Fans help out greatly in doing this.

- When the books are drying, they should not be laid flat and on their spine as this causes damage to them. Instead, every 20 pages or so, put in some paper towels to soak up water. If the paper towels become thoroughly wet, they may be changed with new towels, as needed.
- Any books that are less damp could be stood on their edges, lightly fanned, supported so that the pages don't curl, and allowed to dry in a current of air.
- Freeze any books that you won't be able to get to for later drying. Keep these books wet until they are placed in the freezer.
  - This is especially true for any books that have coated pages, such as photo books, which may possibly be salvaged with towels in between every page. When these books dry naturally, the pages fuse together like glue.

**Post Disaster Report Form**

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Date and time of the disaster:

Location of incident:

Type of incident: (circle one)

Water, Fire, Other \_\_\_\_\_

Items affected: (list below)

Source of Problem: (circle one)

WATER, FIRE

Pipes

Electrical

Drains

Trash

Sink/Toilet

Kitchen

Roof

Other \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose any photos with this form to be kept on file, and to be reviewed by the library trustees and library executive.

## **Pre-Existing Conditions Audit**

Audit should be completed every year or two to examine, in detail, conditions of the library that could potentially be hazardous to patrons, staff, or the building itself.

### **EXTERIOR:**

### **INTERIOR:**

Main room:

Children's room:

Stacks:

Offices:

Bathroom:

Basement:

## **Incident Report Form**

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Date and time of incident:

Location of incident:

Type of incident:

Person involved – name and contact information:

Public witness name and contact information:

Public witness report and signature:

Staff witness name and contact information:

Staff witness report and signature:

I refused medical treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

## Complete Emergency Contact List

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Library Executive

Sara Knobel

(607) 345-5294

[director@grotonpubliclibrary.org](mailto:director@grotonpubliclibrary.org)

Monica Dykeman

Chris Williams

Linda Bonavia

Kelly Smith

Groton Public Library

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Pam Vitale

(607) 592- 5458

[pvitale@grotonpubliclibrary.org](mailto:pvitale@grotonpubliclibrary.org)

### **Electrician**

Pleasant Valley

272-6922

**DPW – 898-3345**

### **Burriss Plumbing**

Jim Proper

257-4554

**Village of Groton – 898-3966**

### **Air Conditioning**

HSC Associates

273-2180

### **Insurance**

Chris Dempsey

898-5134

### **Fire – 911**

**Police – 898-3131, if no answer 911**